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Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Thematic evaluation of cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support and regional organizations

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

"Cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping has contributed to the overall capacity of the United Nations to deploy and sustain peacekeeping missions, although organizational differences between the United Nations and its partners have created multiple challenges in operational cooperation"

Summary

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has become increasingly important in the field of peacekeeping. The present thematic evaluation report shows that cooperation with regional organizations is relevant and important at a time when the demand for peacekeeping interventions continues to be high, United Nations capacity is stretched and available resources are diminished owing to the global economic crisis. Feedback from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support and regional partners showed an unequivocal level of commitment to working together to maintain peace and security. For regional organizations, the legitimacy that comes from a Security Council mandate represents a central reason for such cooperation.

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For the period from 2005 to 2010, the two Departments cooperated more actively, as compared to other periods, with the African Union and the European Union in the area of peacekeeping. These partnerships became formalized and institutionalized, including political declarations outlining their ambition to work together, frequent interactions at the Headquarters level and a wealth of experience from operational cooperation.

Cooperation with regional organizations largely focused on the field missions. Cooperation in the field was often implemented through ad hoc mechanisms and processes to address pressing operational needs. While such processes were flexible and met needs as they arose, they did not result in systematic institutional learning. In a few cases, the United Nations and the regional organizations were able to share tangible resources, although there was feedback showing that field-level cooperation was costly and meant a considerable investment of staff time for planning and communications. Nevertheless, cooperation was seen as a mechanism that could allow peacekeeping initiatives to broaden the scope of what the two Departments could accomplish without partners.

Differences in organizational structures, institutional procedures and requirements are key challenges faced by the Departments and the regional organizations in their cooperative endeavours. Thus far, interaction and cooperation have not led to an adequate understanding of each other's organizations, and understanding that could potentially mitigate such challenges.

In order for cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations to be effective and efficient, it is important to define respective responsibilities and improve coherence in approaches and actions which could ultimately increase predictability and minimize frictions in their relationships. A better definition of roles and responsibilities should be guided by a strategic vision for the relationship between the United Nations and the regional organizations, although it must be kept in mind that the question of whether political will coalesces around the deployment of a mission is ultimately unpredictable.

While the Departments should continue to advocate for stronger and clearer guidance from the intergovernmental bodies in defining a strategic vision, until such guidance is received there is room for a more strategic approach to the optimal use of existing resources at the level of the Departments. The present report recommends that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations expand activities that have an immediate impact on enhancing knowledge of the structure, procedures and constraints of the regional organizations; improve guidance for more effective planning for a joint or bridging mission; and strengthen mechanisms for sharing information between organizations, including classified or restricted information.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 64/229, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Coordination that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) undertake a thematic evaluation on coordination and cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support (hereafter "the Departments") and regional organizations. The evaluation is intended to systematically and objectively determine the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of such cooperation in the attainment of peacekeeping objectives.

2. In the present evaluation report, the term "regional organizations" refers to any regional or subregional organization and/or arrangement. The regional organizations under discussion comprise the 11 regional organizations that participate in the high-level meetings with regional organizations chaired by the Secretary-General that have legal, peace and security mandates and that have operational capacity and experience in peacekeeping and/or peacebuilding.[1] In the present report "the United Nations" is used to refer collectively to the Departments and the concerned intergovernmental bodies.

3. The present evaluation focuses on the cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support and regional organizations in the area of peacekeeping. The evaluation does not cover cooperation between regional organizations and the other Departments of the Secretariat and/or other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the areas of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance or development. The scope of the evaluation does not include collaboration with United Nations special political missions.[2]

4. Cooperation is defined as joint actions between actors in pursuit of a common goal. Activities to enhance mutual understanding that are preparatory and fundamental to joint actions are also part of such cooperation. In the context of cooperation in the field of peacekeeping, in 1995 the Secretary-General identified five forms of cooperation with regional organizations:[3]

(a) Consultation, where views on a conflict are exchanged;

(b) Diplomatic support;

(c) Operational support;

(d) Co-deployment, where the United Nations and regional organizations are co-deployed with different mandates but with a common peacekeeping purpose;

[1] The evaluation examined cooperation with the following organizations: the African Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union, the Intergovernmental Authority for Development, the League of Arab States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Southern African Development Community.

[2] The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), while supported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, is a special political mission and is not covered under the present evaluation.

[3] A/50/60-S/1995/1.

(e) Joint operations, where staffing, direction and financing are shared between the United Nations and regional organizations.

5. Cooperation can occur concurrently and/or sequentially. Concurrent cooperation means that a regional organization has a peacekeeping presence in a troubled country and that the United Nations also has a presence. Under a sequential model of cooperation, the presence of a regional organization may come before and/or after the United Nations peacekeeping presence.

6. The underlying programme logic that guided the evaluation activities from the perspective of the Organization is that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the two Departments in responding to threats to peace and security. The outcome of such cooperation would be more effective peacekeeping, which would lead to peacebuilding and, ultimately, to a sustained peace.

7. Whether the United Nations and a regional organization engage in cooperation on a particular conflict is dependent on the practical will of the organization and its member States. Regional organizations have their own objectives and interests, which do not always coincide with those of the United Nations, and it may be difficult for the United Nations to predict which organizations can and will cooperate and the resources that they will bring to the relationship.

8. The present evaluation draws its conclusions from recent cooperation experiences (2005-2010), and thus it builds heavily on lessons and experience gained through, specific peacekeeping experiences with the African Union, the European Union and, to some extent, NATO.[4] In a number of cases, the results, conclusions and recommendations may therefore prove more relevant to the experience of the United Nations with those organizations than with others.

II. Methodology

9. As the first step in the evaluation process, OIOS reviewed relevant documents, many of which were provided by the Departments, upon request, including: code cables, mandates, reports of the Secretary-General, internal documents, literature on cooperation and coordination and literature on the relevant regional organizations.

10. To develop a better understanding of how the regional organizations viewed cooperation and coordination, OIOS presented them with a written survey. Because of the small sample size,[5] the written results of the questionnaire were not quantitatively analysed, but rather used to supplement and triangulate responses received during interviews.

11. As stated above, the evaluation focuses on the most recent cooperation experiences between the United Nations and regional organizations. The four United Nations peacekeeping missions used as case studies were selected in order to provide the best information on broader themes in this area. The United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), the United

[4] The United Nations cooperated with the Economic Community of West African States in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and with the African Union in Burundi, prior to 2005. These experiences are not covered in the present evaluation.

[5] Out of 11 regional organizations, 4 replied to the survey.

Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)[6] and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) were selected with a view to providing information on the heterogeneity of mission status. UNMIK provides experience from a range of actors, including the European Union, NATO and OSCE. In the case of Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the focus was on cooperation between the two Departments and the European Union, whereas in the case of UNAMID, the focus was on cooperation between the Departments and the African Union. The missions in Kosovo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo provide examples of concurrent cooperation, whereas MINURCAT and UNAMID provide examples of sequential and concurrent cooperation. Support provided to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is also discussed below.

12. OIOS conducted in-depth interviews with United Nations staff members and stakeholders, including several members of the Security Council, senior representatives of several regional organizations,[7] their liaison officers and other staff who have worked extensively with the United Nations. The bulk of the interviews were conducted in person at United Nations Headquarters and the four peacekeeping missions selected for the evaluation. Telephone interviews were conducted when in-person interviews could not be arranged. In total, 200 persons were interviewed between 30 September and 22 December 2010. The Departments provided OIOS with precise data upon request.

Challenges

13. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is discussed broadly with regard to a wide range of issues from conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacekeeping, to reconstruction and peacebuilding. The peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes are not always linear, and it is not always possible to draw a distinction between overall United Nations activities in these multiple areas and to disaggregate data related to activities or initiatives that only involve the two Departments.

III. Background

14. Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations stresses that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security. Chapter VIII of the Charter contains the fundamental principles that guide cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations, while Article 53 recognizes that the regional arrangements or agencies may be used, where appropriate, for enforcement action under the authority of the Council.

15. At the end of the Cold War, there was increased interest in a more active role by the regional organizations in the global security framework. The report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" recognized that regional

[6] All references to Kosovo in the present report are understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

[7] The African Union, the European Union, NATO and OSCE.

arrangements or agencies in many cases possess a potential that should be utilized in serving the functions of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding.[8] Regional actors were seen as lightening the burden of the United Nations Secretariat and as a way of developing a deeper sense of participation, regional ownership, international consensus and democratization in international affairs. The report envisioned such cooperation taking place with the authorization of the Security Council, which would sanction a regional arrangement or organization to take the lead in addressing a crisis. The Council would thus lend the weight of the United Nations to the validity of the regional effort.[9]

16. The policy debate on regionalism picked up momentum in the early years of the millennium when there was a growth in demand for peacekeeping interventions in scale and complexity, challenging the structures supporting international peace and security. In the 2005 Millennium Summit Outcome, the Heads of State and Government recognized the important contribution to peace and security by regional organizations and the importance of forging predictable partnerships and arrangements between the United Nations and the regional organizations.[10]

17. In 2005, the Security Council adopted resolution 1631 (2005), its first on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. The resolution stressed the importance for the United Nations of developing the ability of the regional and subregional organizations to deploy peacekeeping forces rapidly in support of the United Nations peacekeeping operations or other Security Council-mandated operations, and welcomed the relevant initiatives taken in that regard.[11] In 2006, for the first time, the Secretary-General called for a regional-global security partnership.[12]

18. In recent years numerous resolutions and presidential statements of the Security Council on the topics of conflict prevention in Africa, peace and security in Africa, and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security have made reference to the importance of the strengthening of cooperation and communications between the United Nations and regional or subregional organizations or arrangements,[11] and stressed the strength of the regional organizations in being well positioned to understand the root causes of the armed conflicts. ...[13] In that context, the need to enhance the military, technical, logistical and administrative capacities of the African Union has been repeatedly emphasized.[13] In 2010, in a presidential statement, the Council also invited the Secretariat and all regional and subregional organizations that have a capacity for peacekeeping to enhance their working relations and to further explore how their collaboration could better contribute to the fulfilment of United Nations mandates and goals, so as to ensure a coherent framework for peacekeeping.[14]

19. Cooperation between the Departments and regional organizations was undertaken within a much wider spectrum of cooperation by entities of the United

[8] A/47/277-S/24111, para. 64.
[9] Ibid., para. 65.
[10] Resolution 60/1, para. 93.
[11] See Security Council resolution 1631 (2005).
[12] A/61/204-S/2006/590, paras. 79 and 87.
[13] See Security Council resolution 1809 (2008).
[14] S/PRST/2010/1.

Nations system as a whole. By reviewing literature on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of peacekeeping, a number of possible gains were identified:[15]

(a) Burden-sharing: United Nations resources are stretched and the Organization does not have the capacity to fully address all the global demands for peace and security;

(b) A stronger political base for peacekeeping operations;

(c) Partners with more knowledge about the context of particular conflicts;

(d) Partners with more operational flexibility that could respond to emerging conflicts in a more timely manner than the United Nations;

(e) Partners that can better facilitate post-conflict reconstruction and may provide lasting political support for long-term peacebuilding.

20. Literature on this subject also shows that needed improvements in cooperation are driven, in part, by a growing number of organizations engaged in peacekeeping with overlapping mandates and geographical focus. "While each organization can contribute valuable resources, expertise and its own distinctive approach to the promotion of peace and security, it has also become clear that the risk of duplication of efforts and even outright competition between actors is high and, indeed, a serious impediment to a coherent response to complex crises. Thus, the importance of an effective and efficient inter-organizational approach has repeatedly been stressed by policymakers and analysts alike."[16]

21. In 2010, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations encouraged the Secretariat to develop exercises and training policies with regional arrangements aimed at improving interoperability and to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the regional arrangements and requested the Secretariat to identify the most important lessons learned from the cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements.[17]

22. While partnerships are emphasized in the overall peacekeeping reform discussions and efforts,[18] one should note that the United Nations engagement with

[15] OIOS reviewed a large number of academic research papers on the topic of cooperation in peacekeeping, including: (a) Joachim Koops, ed., "Military crisis management: The Challenges of Inter-organizationalism", *Studia Diplomatica*, vol. 62, No. 3 (2009); and "Effective Multilateralism in Peacekeeping, Capacity-Building and Crisis Management: The Challenge of Inter-organizational Cooperation", Focus Paper, No. 1 (2010); (b) Markus Derblom, Eva Hagström and Jennifer Schmidt, "UN-EU-AU Coordination in Peace Operations in Africa", *FOI*, Swedish Defence Research Agency (2008); (c) Kristin M. Haugevik, "New partners, new possibilities: The evolution of inter-organizational security cooperation in international peace operations", *Security in Practice*, No. 6 (2007); (d) Henning Melber, ed., "The United Nations, Security and Peacekeeping in Africa: lessons and prospects", Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Occasional Paper Series, No. 5 (October 2008); (e) "Towards an understanding of peacekeeping partnerships: Prospects, Lessons Learned and the future of partnerships in Africa", Center on International Cooperation (June 2008); and (f) Cedric de Coning, "The Emerging UN/AU Peacekeeping Partnership", *Conflict Trends*, Issue No. 1 (2010).

[16] Joachim Koops, "Effective Multilateralism in Peacekeeping, Capacity-Building and Crisis Management: The Challenge of Inter-organizational Cooperation", Focus, Paper No. 1 (2010).

[17] See A/64/19, paras. 171 and 172.

[18] Resolution 61/276, sect. XXI, para. 1.

partnerships, including partnerships with regional organizations, has potential drawbacks. The strength of the United Nations in its legitimacy and impartiality could be weakened if a regional organization sets the agenda or if regional actors reflect a national or a group interest that differs from consensus reached at the United Nations. This could lead to a loss of political will and support from the wider international community. Furthermore, utilizing regional capacities for peacekeeping is by no means a guarantee for success. Literature on this subject also reflects varied levels of success in past cooperative endeavours.[19]

IV. Results

A. Cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the regional organizations during the period between 2005 and 2010 varied considerably in scope and depth

23. With the United Nations resources for peacekeeping stretched both in the field and at Headquarters, the Departments have sought cooperation mainly with those organizations that, a priori, have the desire and the resources to contribute to peace and security in the field. This meant that, while the Departments were open to establishing new partners, initial contacts and exchanges did not quickly lead to joint actions. The Departments sought to expand cooperation only to a limited degree with regional organizations that did not meet the above requirements. In the final analysis, except for the cooperation with the African Union, the European Union and, to a lesser degree, NATO, cooperation between the Departments and other regional organizations has been limited.

24. Two organizations, the African Union and the European Union, interacted frequently with the Departments, both at the policy level and in peacekeeping missions, where they cooperated through joint missions, transition processes or other forms of operational cooperation. The European Union has the will and the capacity to engage in peacekeeping side by side or together with the United Nations. While the African Union has the aspiration to become a key player in peacekeeping, and has launched missions in challenging situations, it needs support in strengthening its capacity to manage and sustain a mission. Both organizations interacted with the Departments regularly at the strategic level in a number of areas. The Departments also cooperated to some degree with NATO, both at the policy level and in missions.

B. The United Nations and some regional organizations are committed to cooperating on peacekeeping issues and activities

25. Regional organizations sought cooperation with the United Nations for several different reasons, depending on their interests and capacities. Since the United Nations has been engaged in peacekeeping for decades longer than most other organizations, learning from its experiences was of vital interest to regional

[19] Laurie Nathan, "The Peacemaking Effectiveness of Regional Organisations", working paper No. 81, Global and Regional Axes of Conflict", working paper No. 81 (2010).

organizations interested in expanding in the peacekeeping arena. Other reasons for cooperation with the United Nations included the growing need for multidimensional responses to conflict and the potential of access to more funding support. In addition, in view of the fact that several organizations have overlapping capacities, and could potentially deploy in the same areas, cooperation is even more important.

26. In order to strengthen its capacity for peacekeeping, the African Union has engaged in a range of capacity-building activities with the United Nations, drawing on the Organization's experience and standards, and thus strengthening capacities for African peacekeeping. Current peacekeeping operations in Africa, and the need to develop longer-term capacity, have pushed the scope and pace of interaction between the Departments and the African Union. In the case of UNAMID in Darfur and with AMISOM, the Departments and the African Union were engaged in the introduction of new models of field operations to respond to the need for interventions (see sect. D and sect. E below).

27. The European Union expressed several objectives for cooperating with the two Departments. According to the European Security Strategy and other key documents, its objectives included: supporting effective multilateralism, in order to contribute to United Nations efforts in peacekeeping;[20] and to enhance capacity for peacekeeping missions in both the United Nations and the European Union. Legitimacy and credibility were other key objectives for the European Union in its cooperation with the United Nations. Furthermore, the European Union recognized the need to enhance coherence between the organizations in terms of standards and procedures for peacekeeping in order to work together more effectively.

28. NATO sought to cooperate with the United Nations partly to enlarge its available tools for peacekeeping.[21] While NATO has substantial military assets under its command, interviewees at NATO noted that it lacked other civilian capacities. As peacekeeping missions become increasingly more multidimensional, with broadened mandates that include, for example, protection of civilians and reform of the justice sector, it is imperative that NATO engage in cooperation with other bodies in order to enhance its response to the complex security challenges. Cooperation with organizations such as the United Nations could provide NATO and its partners with a broader set of tools in responding to complex conflicts.

C. There is no clearly articulated strategic vision guiding cooperation between the Departments and the regional organizations in peacekeeping

29. In 1998, in a presidential statement, the Security Council underlined the importance of establishing a clear framework for cooperating and coordinating with regional or subregional organizations. The Council stated that such a framework should, at a minimum, specify the objectives of cooperation, clearly delineate the

[20] European Union, "A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy", Brussels, 12 December 2003; Council of the European Union, "Joint Declaration on UN-EU Cooperation in Crisis Management", Brussels, 19 September 2003; Council of the European Union, "Joint Statement on UN-EU cooperation in Crisis Management", 7 June 2007.

[21] Michael F. Harsch and Johannes Varwick, "NATO-UN Cooperation Revisited: A New Dawn?", *Studia Diplomatica*, vol. 62, No. 3 (2009).

roles and responsibilities of the organizations, describe the areas of interaction of forces and have clear provisions regarding the safety and security of personnel, noting, however, such a framework was still missing.[22]

30. While the Departments had the "New Horizon" process[23] to engage in discussions on the strategic vision for future peacekeeping, there was no clearly articulated strategy for cooperation with regional organizations, clarifying the respective roles of the Departments and the regional organizations. Nor was there any clarity on who should set the long-term objectives for partnerships with these organizations. There were different views within the Security Council and the Departments as to whether this should be driven by the Secretary-General and the Secretariat or by the Security Council itself.

31. The Secretariat was of the view that strengthening the relationship between the Departments and the African Union Commission was subject to a political vision and clear guidance from the legislative bodies of the United Nations. The Secretary-General, in two recent reports to the Security Council on support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations,[24] stressed that such political direction was needed and stated in the most recent report that it should entail "a clearly defined expectation of roles of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security".[25] On the other hand, feedback received from member States showed that there was a wish for the Secretary-General to show leadership as the Council was absorbed with current conflict issues and had not devoted significant time to reflecting on where the long-term partnership with the regional organizations, in particular the African Union, should be heading.

32. The Secretary-General indicated that he would submit a report in April 2011,[26] which would, among other things, "define the Secretariat's strategic vision for the United Nations-African Union cooperation in peace and security".[27] Such an initiative would be a step in the right direction. However, to avoid raising expectations that the Departments would not be able to meet, the Departments will need to engage in a comprehensive dialogue with the African Union on what such a vision means and how it should be implemented.

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[22] S/PRST/1998/35.

[23] "A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for United Nations Peacekeeping", commonly known as the "New Horizon" document, was released by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support in July 2009. It initiated a process of dialogue, to "assess the major policy and strategy dilemmas facing United Nations peacekeeping today and over the coming years and to reinvigorate the ongoing dialogue with stakeholders on possible solutions to better calibrate United Nations peacekeeping to meet current and future requirements". Further information and press reviews are also available from http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/newhorizon.shtml.

[24] See A/65/510-S/2010/514 and A/64/359-S/2009/70.

[25] A/65/510-S/2010/514, para. 55.

[26] OIOS was not able to obtain an advance copy of the report and was therefore not in the position to provide comments on aspects of the newly formulated strategy that are relevant to the present evaluation.

[27] A/65/510-S/2010/514, para. 63.

D. Frameworks and structures for cooperation have been established with a few regional organizations in peacekeeping, but the actual practice of cooperation lacked measurable objectives

Joint declarations laid the foundation that enabled further cooperation

33. Regional organizations that were engaged with the Departments in dialogue and other cooperation activities laid out broad common goals embodied in the form of joint declarations. The declarations reflect the scope, focus and stages of the relationships.

34. The Joint Declaration on UN-EU cooperation, signed in 2003, initiated the formalization of the relationship between the two organizations in the peacekeeping area. The declaration was renewed in 2007, with an emphasis on advancing and deepening the relationship, providing it with reliable and sustainable mechanisms and seeking to enhance compatibility in the areas of planning, training, communications and best practices.

35. The Joint Declaration on United Nations/NATO Secretariat Cooperation, signed in 2008, underscored the value of effective and efficient coordination that had developed in operations. The declaration highlighted the importance of establishing a framework for consultation and dialogue at different levels to develop further cooperation. Information sharing and communication was seen as critical in areas of:

(a) Planning and support for contingencies;

(b) Capacity-building, training and exercises;

(c) Lessons learned;

(d) Operational coordination and support.

36. The declaration on enhancing United Nations-African Union cooperation affirmed the mutual commitment and the overall framework of cooperation with the objective of enhancing the capacity of the African Union Commission and the African subregional organizations to act as effective United Nations partners. The memorandum on prospects of effective cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations, annexed to the declaration, highlights several focus areas for building the peacekeeping capacity of the African Union, including institution-building and manpower development; training of civilian and military personnel; logistics and provision of key operation enablers; and mobilizing financial support. [28]

37. All of the above declarations carried political significance and enabled the organizations to work together. A declaration allows for the exploration of possibilities for expanding cooperation and coordination. For example, prior to the 2008 joint declaration with NATO, cooperation with NATO had been slow getting off the ground. The declaration was seen as critical for having created space for more free flowing dialogue on different topics. But, while these declarations served as broad policy frameworks, they did not directly inform cooperation in practice as they contained few specific actions or measurable objectives.

[28] The declaration on enhancing United Nations-African Union cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union (A/61/630, annex).

The United Nations-European Union Steering Committee exemplifies a structure that exists to fortify cooperation and coordination

38. Thus far, the European Union has had the most formalized interaction with the Departments. When the United Nations-European Union Joint Declaration was issued, a need was foreseen for a structure to facilitate the cooperation envisaged therein.

39. The United Nations-European Union Steering Committee, a joint consultative mechanism created in 2003, is the main forum for cooperation on peacekeeping between the two organizations. It meets biannually, drawing together a wide range of actors from both organizations. The Committee initially focused its efforts on four areas for cooperation: planning; training; communications; and best practices.

40. The Steering Committee has facilitated cooperation and information exchanges on ongoing peacekeeping missions as well as cross-cutting issues such as lessons learned, gender, training, information sharing, capacity-building and policing. At the insistence of the Steering Committee, the United Nations and the European Union have jointly produced three After Action Reviews.[29] The Steering Committee has also facilitated more broadly framed exchanges on the peacekeeping reform policies in the context of the "New Horizon" process.

41. There are divergent views as to how effectively the Steering Committee has operated. While some considered the meetings of the Committee to be a useful forum for information exchange, others expressed concern over the lack of operational outcomes and decreasing relevance. One theme that emerged from interviews was that when the Committee came into existence, cooperation was new and the organizations had a dearth of operational knowledge about each other. However, concern was expressed that as the relationship between the United Nations and the European Union had matured, the Committee's agenda and function has not. Cooperation between the organizations in Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kosovo provided lessons that needed to be captured and recorded as part of the history of the relationship.

42. In addition, interviewees felt that the Steering Committee had not adequately addressed areas where operational cooperation had revealed weaknesses or areas where cooperation should be strengthened, and some expressed a need for more operational outcomes from the Committee. While this biannual forum for high-level discussions could not realistically cover all issues of importance, the usefulness and feasibility of other mechanisms warrant further study in order to strengthen coordinated responses to more operational and short-term issues or challenges. To buttress the Committee's value, it might more systematically engage in discussions on lessons learned and general experiences from the missions.

[29] After Action Review, planning for the EU-led peacekeeping force in support of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) during the electoral period, 2006; After Action Review, United Nations-European Union planning for the European Union Military Operation in the Republic of Chad and in the Central African Republic, 29 April 2008; After Action Review: Transition from the European Union-led peacekeeping force to MINURCAT, 2009.

The support of the Departments for operational cooperation and long-term capacity-building of the African Union is woven together by multiple internal coordination mechanisms

43. During the last decade, cooperation with the African Union dramatically increased. The United Nations engagement with and support to the African Union in the Sudan and Somalia was a central theme in the Departments. The efforts of the Departments were part of a larger-scale effort to support the African Union in its peace and security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development efforts.[30]

44. The Security Council has held annual meetings with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union since 2007. In this regard, the Departments, together with the Department of Political Affairs, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, followed up on the implementation of Security Council mandates. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations led in coordinating issues related to peacekeeping within the cluster on peace and security under the regional coordination mechanism.

45. In addition to operational requirements, the partnership was largely driven by its political and operational context. Nearly all interviewees familiar with this area confirmed that cooperation with the African Union was absolutely necessary. Actual operational structures (for example, the hybrid mission in the Sudan and the AMISOM troops deployed in Somalia with the Departments providing planning, operational and logistical support) represented new models of cooperation intended to meet the need for international actions while transferring knowledge to and building the capacity of the African Union.

46. The support of the Departments to the development of the operational capability of the African Standby Force[31] closely aligned with the road map of the African Union. Efforts were made to pinpoint the priorities and gain political support towards building the longer-term institutional capacity to manage a complex peacekeeping operation.[32] The Departments have dedicated staff capacity to provide technical and planning advice to the African Union Commission (chiefly to its Division of Peace Support Operations). The relationship is described as "evolving", with short-term objectives often changing. It was unclear if and how the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support should reach out to the departments of the African Union Commission, including in the areas of public information, finance and administration, vis-à-vis backstopping capacity for field missions.

47. The organization of the Departments' efforts to support the African Union was complex, and the necessity of multilayered coordination sometimes enabled confusion. The African Union Peacekeeping Support Team was originally designed to lead the Departments' support efforts, with staff members based in both New York and Addis Ababa. Since 2009, the Support Team has chaired a working group

[30] A/61/204-S/2006/590; S/2008/18; S/2008/186; A/64/359-S/2009/470; and A/65/510-S/2010/514.

[31] The African Standby Force is part of the structure of the African Peace and Security Architecture. It consists of five multinational brigades from each of the respective regions of the African Union, which are accountable to the African Union Peace and Security Council. The African Standby Force is to be equipped and ready for rapid deployment in a variety of situations, ranging from observation to peace enforcement. Available from http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/auc/departments/psc/asf/asf.htm#.

[32] See A/65/510-S/2010/514.

to monitor initiatives aimed at strengthening support to the African Union undertaken by different offices within the Departments. Other coordination mechanisms included the integrated operational teams that led support to UNAMID. A special coordination mechanism in Addis Ababa, the joint support and coordination mechanism, was set up to enhance communications between the United Nations and the African Union; as part of UNAMID, the mechanism reported to both entities. Support to AMISOM was more complex, involving a team within the African Division II of the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York, the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM in Nairobi and the United Nations planning team in Addis Ababa.

48. In July 2010, in order to enhance coherence and streamline communications, the Addis Ababa-based United Nations offices working on peace and security issues, with the exception of the substantive components of the UNAMID joint support and coordination mechanism, were integrated into one single office, the United Nations Office to the African Union.[33] While it is too early to assess the effect of the Office on building synergy between the two organizations, it has already faced challenges in terms of office space, timely recruitment and multiple reporting lines to United Nations Headquarters. Field interviews revealed a need for clarity on how the different Headquarters backstopping offices[34] coordinate with each other and, possibly, further structural changes in New York.

The United Nations and the regional organizations developed different ways of cooperating at the Headquarters level

49. Forms of exchange between the Departments and the headquarters of the regional organizations included dialogue and visits of senior officials, desk-to-desk exchanges, staff talks, education days and study tours. Cooperation with regional organizations also benefited from an increased use of liaison offices. The United Nations Office to the African Union and its predecessor offices were key elements in ensuring the flow of communication between the United Nations and the African Union. The African Union also maintains its office of the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations in New York. The delegation of the European Union to the United Nations in New York facilitated cooperation between the European Union and the Departments, and the recent opening of a United Nations office in Brussels indicates that cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations is likely to increase. NATO also maintains military and civilian liaison officers in New York. The creation of the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was one reform measure aimed at prioritizing partnerships in peacekeeping, and the groundwork has been laid to build a strategic and proactive approach in that regard.

50. Despite these efforts, the lack of inter-organizational knowledge and understanding has often posed a hurdle to improving cooperation over time. This was most common in the field but was also found at Headquarters. "Education

[33] The United Nations Office to the African Union, while providing support to the African Union, reports solely to the United Nations.

[34] All references to the Headquarters backstopping offices in the present report refer to those within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. Please see paras. 1-8 above for more information on the scope of the evaluation.

days", organized by the Departments in collaboration with the European Union and NATO, were appreciated, but were held less frequently than desired.

51. Little progress was reported with respect to staff exchanges, which represent a concrete approach to increasing knowledge about international partners and which were perceived as an effective way of facilitating communication. In spite of the potential, staff exchanges have rarely taken place due, inter alia, to resource shortages and a lack of guidance on gratis personnel when they were offered to the Departments.

52. As concerns the relationship between the United Nations and the European Union, staff on both sides often felt that the organizations were overly complex and bureaucratic, a sentiment that applied particularly to the last two to three years when both entities underwent significant restructuring.[35,36]

53. With regard to the African Union, communication with the Departments at times lacked clarity, which might have led to excessively high expectations of their ability to support the African Union. Some of the expectations the African Union had of the Departments in providing certain types of support did not take into consideration that the responses of the two Departments, and the swiftness of those responses, were subject to a mandate from United Nations intergovernmental bodies.

E. While cooperation with the regional organizations occurred at the policy and operational level, it was largely driven by operational needs

The closest and most frequent cooperation between the Departments and the regional organization was found at the missions

54. At the mission level, cooperation was always a function of the broader political process and subject to Security Council mandates. No evidence emerged to suggest that operational cooperation was systematically deepening over time as a result of increased experiences. Recent operations (for example, MINURCAT, MONUSCO, UNMIK, AMISOM, Somalia and UNAMID), in their cooperative relationships, their broader political context and their specific mandates, were unique unto themselves. The United Nations and the regional organizations did not always share the same interests and objectives in seeking cooperation in a specific country setting, within which political necessity and pressing challenges dictated the actual terms of a wide range of engagements.

(a) In Kosovo, several coordination mechanisms were implemented to facilitate cooperation between the international community, particularly UNMIK, the European Union, NATO and OSCE. A "pillar structure" was designed to ensure a system-wide approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The structure

[35] The Department of Field Support was split from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 2007.

[36] The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, marked the start of a fundamental reform of the European Union. It will potentially strengthen the overall coherence in the Union's foreign policy. The Treaty will affect the structures and procedures for the Union's peacekeeping activities in a number of ways, including by creating greater coherence between the different instruments available for crisis management.

established the framework for an unprecedented interaction between the United Nations and its partners, with regional organizations being responsible for different pillars under the overall authority of the United Nations. While the experiences of working under the pillar structure have been mixed at best, the approach to peacekeeping in Kosovo showed flexibility and a willingness to work together. The fact that the UNMIK reconfiguration and the deployment of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo were closely coordinated led to high levels of interaction. Although there were frictions related to the logistical support in the field, the organizations found pragmatic ways of working together without losing substantial operational capacity during the process. Regular videoconferences between the headquarters offices and frequent exchanges of visits, established to ensure ease of communication, were found useful. Weekly coordination meetings in the field, which draw together all major actors in Kosovo and include the sharing of information on upcoming activities, continue up to today;

(b) In Chad, the European Union deployed a bridging military force in support of the activities of MINURCAT for the protection of civilians mandate authorized by the Security Council. In January 2009, the Council expanded MINURCAT's mandate to provide for the deployment of a United Nations follow-on force. The exchange of letters and series of technical arrangements provided an overall framework for the transition from the European Union military operation in the Republic of Chad and in the Central African Republic to the United Nations military deployment, which covered a range of logistical issues, although these could not predict or address all support problems in the absence of early joint planning. The key challenge faced in this case was that the vagueness in the language of the initial resolution could lead to expectations for transition, while the legal authorization and resources were not available to enable such actions. This gap led to significant complications for a number of issues, most prominently on the differences in handover of infrastructure and possible cost sharing as related to infrastructure and maintenance of infrastructure;

(c) In Somalia, AMISOM benefited from the technical advice, logistical support and assistance of the two Departments in raising and managing extrabudgetary resources. The focal point of the United Nations in Somalia was the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, a political mission, which took the lead of the United Nations system-wide efforts in the country. The role of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was advisory to the African Union regarding the planning and deployment of AMISOM. In addition, the Department was also requested by the Security Council to "continue planning, in cooperation with the African Union, for force generation and logistical, administrative, financial and other arrangements necessary to transition from AMISOM to a United Nations peacekeeping operation".[37] The Department of Field Support is mandated to provide logistical support to the troops in the field using assessed contributions;

(d) The jointly managed UNAMID, which was a unique hybrid mission, gave rise to a new set of challenges and opportunities. The hybrid nature, which allowed for the African character of the mission, was the only form acceptable to the host Government. The mission was established directly after the provision of light and heavy support packages, which were first agreed upon with the African Union to strengthen the mission support of the African Union Mission in the Sudan. The

[37] Security Council resolution 1863 (2009), paras. 4 and 13.

tripartite mechanism, a senior-level body comprising the Departments, the African Union Commission, and the Government of the Sudan, met periodically to discuss political issues. At the start-up phase, frequent three-way videoconferences occurred to ensure smooth communication and handle any emerging operational issues. The Departments and the African Union jointly appointed UNAMID senior leadership, with dual reporting lines to both New York and Addis Ababa. Collectively, these measures made it possible for the hybrid mission to maintain presence in Darfur, although views were mixed with respect to impacts on efficiency;

(e) In 2006, the European Union deployed forces in the capital area of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to support MONUC during the national elections. The additional support temporarily strengthened the position of MONUC in the capital, allowing additional Mission forces to be deployed outside the city. Interviews revealed that the European Union force and MONUC frequently communicated during that period.[38] However, since several important aspects, including agreements on information exchange and cooperation on logistics were weak, the leadership of both MONUC and the European Union military operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo relied instead on personal relations and ad hoc mechanisms for cooperation.[39,40]

Operation-driven cooperation was characterized by ad hoc coordination mechanisms to address immediate needs, with little institutional memory being developed

55. Operation-driven cooperation resulted in cooperation that was largely ad hoc in nature. Activities undertaken were often in response to situations at hand, and thus lacked a clear pattern or predictability, resulting in ad hoc mechanisms designed for coordination around immediate operational needs. Many of these different mechanisms or processes proved effective and responsive to the dynamic and changing situations at hand, including:

(a) Joint fact-finding missions or assessments of conflicts;

(b) Cooperation in the planning phase through information exchange, liaison and videoconferences to address issues in the predeployment and start-up phases;

(c) Using liaison officers, setting up field level forums for coordination, sharing logistical assets and undertaking joint after action reviews.[41]

56. Since every peacekeeping mission presented a unique set of challenges and dynamics, a level of flexibility and pragmatism was needed to serve their needs. However, to ensure sustained positive momentum, a level of stocktaking, including the transmission of lessons learned and knowledge as part of the record for the use of future joint actions, is desirable. Lessons learned thus far have been neither

[38] Claudia Morsut, "Effective Multilateralism? EU-UN Cooperation in the DRC, 2003-2006", *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 16, No. 2, 2009.

[39] After Action Review, Planning for the EU-led military operation in support of MONUC during the electoral period, 2006; available from http://intranet.dpko.un.org/dpko/pages/KnowledgeSharing.aspx.

[40] Claudia Major, "EU-UN cooperation in military crisis management: the experience of EUFOR RD Congo in 2006", Occasional Paper, Institute for Security Studies, 2008.

[41] The European Union and the United Nations have conducted three joint after action reviews for the missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Chad.

systematically gathered nor easily transformable into policies or guidelines. For instance, while the European Union-United Nations Steering Committee facilitated joint lessons learned exercises at peacekeeping missions, the lessons identified were not proactively followed up to ensure their implementation at future peacekeeping missions, and there were shared concerns over the loss of such valuable experience to the institutional memory of both organizations. Staff members directly involved with cooperating with other organizations doubted whether what they had learned would be communicated to other staff who might work in similar functions, or to persons who might someday replace them, as and when required.

57. Staff members also reported the practical difficulties associated with lessons learning processes:

(a) Quick rotation of staff members throughout the life cycle of a mission;

(b) Difficulties in gaining access to staff members after their departure from the theatre;

(c) Lack of dedicated staff with time to gather information and formulate it into useful lessons appropriate for a wide audience;

(d) Doubts about the feasibility of applying lessons learned in one mission to another mission setting.

58. With the exception of the 2008 "Guidelines for joint UN-EU planning applicable to existing United Nations field missions", the Departments have not developed specific guidelines for cooperating with regional organizations on any of the functional areas of peacekeeping missions. The aforementioned guidelines provide basic guidance for joint planning of military peacekeeping missions, providing a description of respective planning processes, suggestions for the creation of a coordination group for planning and a checklist of arrangements that would typically be needed by a European Union mission that provides support to the United Nations.[42] Concerned staff members provided positive feedback on its utility. Thus, a desire for more clarity and guidelines on a wide range of issues was expressed, including information on the other structures, constraints and working procedures at their organizations.

59. On the other hand, when lessons were learned they were not easily or systematically translated into policy or changes in actions in the field. This is an area of both general and particular concern because even when changes were made at one organization, they did not necessarily lead to improved cooperation unless corresponding changes were made by the counterpart. Joint lessons learning exercises were rare and reported to be difficult to organize.

F. The Departments faced challenges when cooperating with another organization in the field

60. Differences in institutional structures, procedures and chains of command posed challenges to efficiency and coherence at peacekeeping missions. At peacekeeping missions, the United Nations and the regional organizations it worked

[42] Another document, "Briefing Note on the European Union Crisis Management", was issued in 2009 to facilitate general understanding of the European Union as a strategic partner.

with had different structures and procedures to govern the decision-making process for the launching and running of a field mission. For example, when the United Nations and the European Union worked together, the chain of command between the headquarters and the field and between the different components of a field mission varied. Furthermore, the level of decentralization in day-to-day decision-making differed as well. Clearly, these structures were not created with cooperation with another institution in mind. Since they did not match up, it was often difficult to synchronize actions in line with the working methods of the partner organization.

61. In the case of a United Nations-led peacekeeping mission, the Departments and a United Nations field mission were mandated and resourced to deliver and perform particular tasks using an approved mission-specific strategic framework. Similarly, the regional organizations with which the Departments cooperate[1] had their own strategic framework, with their own lines of reporting, accountability and decision-making. Once the Security Council has authorized the actions of a regional organization, the legislative body of the concerned regional organization would routinely follow through with its own protocols for building consensus among its member States, prescribing specific requirements. Such processes were independent from the United Nations process and naturally required separate planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting structures. In the cases where a mission led by another regional organization existed with a Security Council mandate or fell under a United Nations umbrella, such deployments were first and foremost responsible to their respective legislative bodies, although the Department of Peacekeeping Operations coordinated reporting to the Security Council. It was not uncommon for the United Nations and the regional organizations to interpret the original Security Council mandate in different ways, and to have different views on the division of labour, leaving room for operational challenges and competition.

62. For example, the chains of command of the United Nations and the European Union differ considerably. The United Nations does not have an equivalent to the European Union's operational headquarters. Instead, United Nations force commanders in the field head the operation headquarters and have significant delegated authority from United Nations Headquarters. The force commanders report directly to special representatives of the Secretary-General, and the chain of command is relatively short. In the European Union, the command of operations at the military strategic level rest with the operational headquarters and there is a clear distinction between operational headquarters and force headquarters. While United Nations operations are placed under the political direction of a special representative of the Secretary-General, the European Union does not systematically utilize its special representatives or special envoys or place them in the military chain of command.

63. The United Nations mission support system is relatively centralized while the European Union system is decentralized, with troop-contributing countries providing logistical support to the troops on the ground. In Chad, the Departments had to reach an agreement with individual European Union troop-contributing countries on the "re-hatting" of their soldiers as well as a separate technical agreement with the same countries. The experience gained from United Nations and European Union cooperation in operations showed that even though the organizations found ways to work together on logistics and benefited from each other's support, there was a need to make cooperation more effective, structured and predictable.

64. When peacekeepers were "re-hatted" to a United Nations peacekeeping mission, issues pertaining to standards such as the mission support, logistics and troop reimbursement standards complicated aspects of cooperation. For instance, NATO and European Union member States were used to working with military standards for peacekeeping (for example, on procedures for planning and implementing operations), which differ substantially from those used by the United Nations. This made the transition at MINURCAT between the European Union military operation in the Republic of Chad and the Central African Republic and the United Nations difficult, not least since the process relied heavily on soldiers from the European Union operation coming under United Nations command. In Darfur, during the start-up phase of the hybrid mission, the bulk of the efforts were devoted to equipping and training some of the re-hatted contingents, as the requirements of the African Union for the contingent-owned equipment and predeployment training were not sufficient.

65. Information gathered from interviews pointed to a need for more extensive sharing of information, particularly regarding classified or restricted information, when the United Nations and a regional organization were working together in the field. Without proper channels for information sharing, cooperation was difficult and activities disparate. Thus far, discussions on formal agreements for sharing of classified information were only starting. The need for greater interoperability and advancement of standards in this area was recognized by the Departments as critical for strengthened partnerships.

G. Joint efforts are dependent on strong political will and the dedication of staff members of the United Nations and partner organizations to find common ground and establish working level networks

66. Strong political will, which provides both pressure and incentives for operational levels to find pragmatic solutions to the numerous challenges the United Nations and partner organizations face in peacekeeping missions stands out as an imperative if cooperation is to succeed in spite of institutional, procedural and resource constraints.[43] In Kosovo, despite very difficult circumstances, pressure from the highest level of both the European Union and the United Nations was vital in facilitating cooperation between UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo. Political pressure can also get in the way of cooperation, however. Again, the situation in Kosovo showed that different political positions on the conflict and the future status of Kosovo made cooperation between the United Nations and parts of the international community very difficult.

67. Personal relations between high-level representatives from the United Nations and its partner organizations played a large role in creating the conditions for cooperation. It was found that challenging conditions for cooperation in peacekeeping missions could often be overcome if the mission leadership had the skills and willingness to cooperate. In situations where there were no formal structures for cooperation in the field, or where the political circumstances hampered cooperation, personal relations between mission leadership and the

[43] David Harland, "Kosovo and the United Nations", *Survival*, vol. 52, No. 5 (November 2010).

working level networks were able to facilitate close operational cooperation between the United Nations and its partners. Conversely, and understandably, poor personal relations damaged cooperative efforts between the United Nations and regional organizations. When there were no structured mechanisms for cooperation between headquarters, personal relations and networks were seen as key to effective interaction. Having a designated point of contact was seen as a minimum condition for cooperation, without which personal relationships could not develop.

H. Cooperation with regional organizations helped enhance the overall ability to deploy and sustain peace support missions

Cooperation adds value

68. Cooperation between the Departments and the regional organizations was recognized as providing an opportunity for innovative solutions to emerge, enabling alternatives for the Security Council when authorizing peacekeeping missions and enhancing the ability of the Departments in launching and sustaining a peacekeeping mission. At the political level, positive unintended consequences were confirmed by most stakeholders interviewed. In conflicts where the United Nations struggled operationally or when principal conditions for successful United Nations peacekeeping were not present, regional organizations provided viable alternatives.[44] In Chad for example, consent by the host Government was not initially given for the United Nations to deploy a military force. The European Union-led peacekeeping force allowed for a peacekeeping mission to be deployed to the conflict region. In Kosovo, the United Nations was able to take on a great challenge, both in the security and the governance sector, through its cooperation with a range of regional actors.

69. In Somalia, where a United Nations peacekeeping mission was not considered possible, the Security Council authorized the deployment of AMISOM. The African Union took on a mission with limited resources to respond to the severe challenges in the country. The Departments were requested to support and assist the African Union Commission and AMISOM in managing and sustaining the field mission. Support efforts included logistical packages funded by the assessed contributions, fund-raising and management through a trust fund and technical advice through dedicated planners on planning and operational issues.[45] It was a new model for the Departments, working in support of a field mission led by another organization. Cooperation thus expanded the available options for the United Nations to tackle difficult situations and respond to threats to international security.

70. Other than providing will, resources and/or troops, regional organizations could offer a platform for responding to threats through concerted regional efforts, or a dimension of regional integration, both of which have the potential to strengthen the foundations for sustainable peacebuilding efforts. The engagement of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the potential for European integration has played an important part in the peacekeeping and peacebuilding

[44] The report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809), better known as the Brahimi report, provided a comprehensive analysis of peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding.

[45] The United Nations planning team was recently reconfigured as part of the United Nations Office to the African Union (see A/64/762).

process. However, a strong regional perspective has not always been aligned with consensus reached in New York, and the international presence on the ground has not always represented a unified international front.

Regional organizations can strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to respond rapidly

71. Some recognized the ability of the European Union military force to quickly deploy as well as its high military capacities and deterrence effects. The European Union missions have reinforced the United Nations at times when quick actions to protect civilians and save lives were critical. However, questions lingered as to whether what was available at the time was the "right fit" for the situation, given what the United Nations would have wished.

72. Sharing of mission support assets occurred in the most recent cases when the United Nations and the European Union were deployed side by side, although this was normally accompanied by a series of lengthy exchanges and negotiations, the formulation of mission-specific letters of exchange, technical agreements and their clearance by the legal teams of both parties. Lack of understanding about each other's modus operandi and other constraints led to an abundance of misunderstandings, unmet expectations and frustrations at the working level. In the case of MINURCAT, the situation became even more complex as the mandate came only moments before the transition was supposed to take place, leaving very little time for either the Departments or the European Union to properly plan or to execute the necessary actions. Since both organizations require time for troop generation, the recruitment of civilian staff and procurement, this resulted in a certain amount of eleventh-hour logistical juggling for the management of the transition.

The Departments contributed to progress made by the African Union in building the African Peace and Security Architecture

73. The Departments played an important role in the process of building the African Peace and Security Architecture through its contribution to the African Union. The experience of the Departments in planning and managing a peacekeeping mission was valued by the African Union and other stakeholders that also contributed to the building of the Architecture. A majority of the stakeholders interviewed by OIOS in Addis Ababa spoke positively of the credibility and uniqueness of what the Departments brought to the overall mix of international support to the Union. The efforts of the Departments to assist the Union in building the African Standby Force, an important element of the Architecture, have contributed to the progress made from conceptualization to operationalization. The African Standby Force simulation exercise in late October 2010 was an important milestone in that regard.

74. Nonetheless, the Departments faced the challenges of absorptive capacity and donor/partner coordination, and there were situations where their support to the African Union Commission was to function as a substitute capacity. This support was much valued and met the immediate needs of the current field missions; it did not, however, necessarily lead to a sustained incremental improvement in the capacity of the Union.

I. The structure of the Departments for cooperation with regional organizations could have been clearer and more efficient

75. The resources of the Departments for cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping were spread out among several divisions and offices within the two Departments. The Policy, Evaluation and Training Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations took an overall leading role, particularly in the cooperation with the European Union. A small unit within the African Division I of the Office of Operations worked as the focal point for capacity-building support to the African Union, while the interactions specific to the setting up of one field mission was coordinated by the respective integrated operational teams. The Office of Military Affairs led the dialogue between the Departments and NATO. Some coordination, including information sharing and brainstorming, occurred between the leading offices and other offices within the Departments whose work involved cooperation with one or more regional organization. Other resources, such as for funding of staff travel or participation in training or other courses, were reported to be very limited, although the total amount was not made available to OIOS.

76. Feedback indicated that the structure of the Departments for cooperation with regional organizations was not sufficiently clear. Partners often found that there were "too many doors to knock on" and that the same message had to be delivered several times to different offices. The Departments' staff also struggled to find the right counterparts in the partner organizations. In their cooperation with the European Union, there was an evident need for clear points of entry and streamlined communications, in particular when considering that institutional restructuring had recently taken place in both organizations. With the African Union, the Departments often did not have a counterpart due to the human resources constraints faced by the African Union.

77. Views obtained by OIOS indicated several areas for attention. Considered together, they called for more thoughtful analysis and clear articulation of what the Departments could achieve with the available resources in the short- to medium-term, what challenges were presented and how they could be addressed:

(a) The Policy, Evaluation and Training Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should take the lead in order to ensure that lessons learned from recent operational cooperation with the regional organizations will be systematically taken into account in future technical assessments and planning processes;

(b) Some thematic or support specialist areas will need more in-depth exchanges, going further than an exchange of general information;

(c) Joint lessons learned exercises should be expanded. Lessons learned at the technical/tactical levels should be separated from those that should be considered at the political and institutional policy level;

(d) With a rising frequency of operational cooperation, there is a need for basic institutional frameworks to facilitate joint planning for peacekeeping missions between the Departments and their regional partners.

V. Conclusions

78. Cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping has contributed to the overall capacity of the United Nations to deploy and sustain peacekeeping missions, although organizational differences between the United Nations and its partners have created multiple challenges in operational cooperation. The evaluation showed that owing to the unprecedented high number of peacekeeping missions, United Nations personnel, logistics, finance and administrative systems faced severe challenges, and the Organization's capacity to deliver against wide and diverse mission mandates was stretched. Cooperation with regional organizations was relevant and important at a time when the demand for peacekeeping interventions continued to be high and the global economic crisis had diminished available resources. The feedback from the Departments, its regional partners and Member States showed an unequivocal level of commitment to working together to maintain peace and security. For the regional organizations, the legitimacy that comes from a Security Council mandate was still a central reason for such cooperation. Other incentives for the partnership between the United Nations and the regional organizations included capacity-building, institutional learning to improve effectiveness in operations and resource pooling.

79. The United Nations has developed and formalized partnerships in the area of peacekeeping with a few regional organizations. Joint declarations between the United Nations and regional organizations were important to subsequent cooperation by providing, inter alia, the political legitimacy to the inter-organizational interaction. Furthermore, the forums for sustained high-level dialogues, such as the United Nations-European Union Steering Committee and the United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force for Peace and Security, were important to sustaining momentum in the partnership.

80. Overall, the structured cooperation focused on sharing of information and policy exchanges to enhance understanding of each other's structures and procedures. Cooperation in the field was often implemented through ad hoc mechanisms and processes to address pressing operational needs. It was not possible to form conclusive opinions on how cooperation had affected the overall effectiveness of the peacekeeping missions. Clearly, in some cases, missions struggled to implement the mandates and bring stability to conflict-ridden countries even though the United Nations cooperated effectively with regional organizations. Still, without any form of cooperation, the challenges would likely have been even greater.

81. In a few cases, the United Nations and the regional organizations were able to share tangible resources, such as equipment, transport and personnel, in the field. However, the benefits of the limited resource pooling were gained at considerable transaction cost, since the actions required were labour intensive and involved the investment of a significant amount of staff time for planning and communications. Thus far, joint lessons learning exercises had been difficult to organize, and when such exercises had been conducted, albeit sporadically, the lessons drawn had not been turned into policies or acted upon systematically.

82. In their joint operations, the Departments and the regional organizations encountered differences in organizational structures, institutional procedures and requirements that presented key challenges. Such differences are unlikely to change

quickly or disappear. Interaction and cooperation had thus far not led to an adequate mutual understanding in these areas, which could potentially mitigate such challenges. In this respect, agreement and action for deepened, more effective relationships were required in three prominent areas:

(a) The Departments should establish and streamline the points of entry for communications and keep such information up-to-date, available and easily accessible, particularly in times of organizational restructuring or personnel changes;

(b) A complex peacekeeping mission involving multiple organizations often requires sharing and exchanging a large amount of non-public information. Informal networks and personal relations have been useful but insufficient. There is a need for an agreement with the regional partners on information sharing, particularly on classified information;

(c) There is a lack of guidance to ensure that lessons learned on cooperation with other organizations are taken into consideration in planning for new missions.

83. In order for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations to be effective and efficient, it is important to define respective responsibilities and improve coherence in approaches and actions. Such efforts could increase predictability and minimize frictions in exchanges between the entities. A better definition of roles and responsibilities should be guided by a strategic vision for the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, which should be integrated into a broader vision for the maintenance of peace and security.

84. To the extent possible, the Departments should articulate what the United Nations could and would be able to deliver in a particular conflict situation, considering political realities, resource constraints and the strengths and weaknesses of the Departments. A realistic assessment of the probability and depth of engagement of the Departments in a specific operation would enable potential partners to determine whether and how their actions would provide for the development of a coherent and coordinated approach to peacekeeping between the United Nations and regional organizations. Since overall capacity to address conflict situations using a peacekeeping approach may never be sufficient, it is imperative for the boundaries and potential benefits of cooperation to be carefully considered, thus allowing both partners to weigh engagement in operational cooperation judiciously.

85. The Departments should continue to advocate for stronger and clearer guidance from the intergovernmental bodies for defining such a vision. Until such guidance is received, however, there is room for a more strategic approach by the two Departments, an approach that takes into consideration resources and institutional constraints, yet clarifies the internal structure and sets realistic objectives.

86. Ultimately, whether and to what extent the Departments cooperate with regional organizations is first and foremost dependent on the political will of a given regional organization to cooperate. This will is driven by the circumstances of particular conflicts and how such conflicts figure within regional and national political climates and agendas. In addition, the positions of Member States at different forums also have significant implications. In this respect, the Secretary-

General, in his report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, encouraged "... Member States to ensure that their positions in United Nations bodies are fully aligned with the positions they take in regional organizations on relevant aspects of bridging operations and to improve interoperability for future bridging operations".[46] In reality, however, political will is ultimately unpredictable. Clearly, if the Departments reinforce structures and maximize their intelligence prior to the outbreak of conflict, once a political decision is made to assist with peacekeeping, cooperation can proceed more seamlessly.

VI. Recommendations

87. OIOS submits the following seven recommendations for strengthening relationships between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support and regional organizations.

88. *The Departments commented that the report provided a fair and accurate assessment of cooperation between the Departments and regional organizations in peacekeeping, and accepted the recommendations. The Departments also emphasized that while fully prepared to take appropriate measures to implement them, success in this regard will depend on the willingness and capacity of the regional organizations they partner with.*

Recommendation 1

89. **The Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support should adopt a strategic approach to cooperation with the regional organizations in order to achieve the optimal use of existing resources. Such an approach should take into account existing mandates, available resources, inherent institutional differences and other hindrances and should set time-bound goals for achievements (paras. 29-37 and 81-83).**

90. *The Departments commented that the United Nations strategic approach to peace and security issues with the African Union is the subject of twice yearly reviews by the Security Council. The next report on the strategic approach and operational issues is to be issued in April 2011.*

Recommendation 2

91. **The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should expand activities that have an immediate impact on enhancing the knowledge and understanding of the structure, procedures and constraints of those regional organizations that are actively engaged in cooperation with the Departments (paras. 49-53).**

92. *The Departments informed OIOS that it is currently expanding activities to improve its knowledge and understanding of the structures, procedures and constraints of the regional organizations, including for example, with the European Union and NATO through the introduction of monthly meetings with liaison officers to discuss policy issues, operational planning and practical initiatives for mutual support.*

[46] A/64/573, para. 55.

Recommendation 3

93. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should take a leading role, in consultation with the European Union, in exploring the utility and feasibility of developing subsidiary working groups to support the European Union-United Nations Steering Committee in order to better balance the need for general information sharing with the need for in-depth discussions on issues that are likely to have an immediate operational implication and require specific technical expertise (paras. 38-42).

Recommendation 4

94. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should work together with the appropriate regional organizations to create or strengthen mechanisms for information sharing, including methods and standards for classified or restricted information (paras. 50-52, 63 and 80-81).

Recommendation 5

95. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support should ensure that future cooperation build on past experience and lessons from peacekeeping missions (paras. 55-59, 81) by:

(a) Strengthening efforts in documenting and archiving lessons learned from the past operational cooperation with regional organizations such as the European Union and the African Union;

(b) Separating lessons learned at the strategic and planning level from those applicable at the tactical level;

(c) Developing guidelines for improved effectiveness in planning for a joint or bridging mission in order to address core issues in operational cooperation regardless of the specifics of a conflict.

Recommendation 6

96. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support should consider streamlining the structure of the Headquarters offices that backstop the United Nations Office to the African Union or introduce measures to ensure harmonized communications between those offices and the United Nations Office to the African Union (paras. 43-48).

97. *The Departments commented that all the existing mandates and tasks requested by the Security Council and the General Assembly remained unchanged. The specific nature of the mandates and the diversity of tasks necessitates the engagement of a number of offices to support the United Nations Office to the African Union. It is also the main reason why the Office is required to report separately to relevant Departments on matters related to their respective mandates. In addition, it is important to note that the Somalia Coordination and Planning Team in Africa Division II of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was created to backstop not only the functions of the United Nations Office to the African Union related to AMISOM, but also to implement other mandates, including support to the United Nations Political Office in Somalia on the Somali security institutions, contingency planning for the eventual deployment of a United Nations*

peacekeeping operation at the strategic time, and the focal point on naval counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia. With regard to support of the Department of Field Support to the United Nations Office to the African Union, it has been provided through existing resources within various divisions in the Department.

98. *The Departments will continue to review their structures at Headquarters in order to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources. At this stage, an interdepartmental working group continues to coordinate support to the United Nations Office to the African Union on all capacity-building support to the African Union with respect to peacekeeping-related matters. A support working group was also established to coordinate all support matters to that Office.*

Recommendation 7

99. **The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support should establish and streamline clear points of entry for inter-organizational communications, and should keep such shared information up-to-date and easily accessible to authorized partners (paras. 73, 74 and 82).**

(*Signed*) Carman L. **Lapointe**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services
28 February 2011

Annex

Comments received from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support on the draft report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the thematic evaluation of the cooperation between the Departments and regional organizations[a]

1. I refer to your memorandum dated 9 February 2011, regarding the above-mentioned evaluation. DPKO/DFS accept, with some minor exceptions, the factual accuracy of the findings of this evaluation report and the appropriateness of its recommendations. On the whole, the Departments are of the view that the report provides a fair and accurate assessment of cooperation between DPKO/DFS and regional organizations in peacekeeping. The report provides good recommendations that will address current gaps and improve cooperation with critical peacekeeping partners. However, the level of coordination between the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) in DPKO and regional organizations could have been better described. Thus the report should have referred to weekly OMA meetings in which the liaison officers of the regional organizations participate. For a period, OMA also had interaction with the Liaison Officer from the African Union (AU). It would also have been appropriate to mention the monthly meetings between the Military Adviser/DPKO and the liaison officers during which policy issues, mission planning, training and various practical arrangements are being discussed. Together these meetings contribute to a more efficient and effective cooperation and coordination among the involved organizations.

2. Please find below DPKO/DFS comments on the findings and recommendations contained in the report.

Evaluation results

Summary (para. 3)[b]

3. DPKO/DFS disagree that one can use "efficiency gains" to measure partnership with regional organizations. We would instead suggest that there are significant "transaction costs" when partnering with regional organizations, which could be reduced. Furthermore, the report uses the term "transaction cost" in paragraph 81 to describe this challenge; therefore, in order to be consistent, this term should be employed in the summary as well.

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[a] The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) herewith presents the full text of comments from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support on the OIOS draft report on the thematic evaluation of cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support and regional organizations. The inclusion of this information is in line with the decision of the General Assembly in its resolution 64/263, following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee. Overall, DPKO/DFS concurred with the recommendations of OIOS. The comments of the Departments on the draft OIOS report have been incorporated, as appropriate, into the final report.

[b] In some instances the paragraph numbers referred to in the comments received from the Departments do not correspond to the paragraph numbers in the thematic evaluation.

Paragraph 54 (b)

4. We suggest that the first sentence in paragraph 54 (b) be replaced with the following two sentences to avoid any possible misunderstanding regarding the European Union (EU): "In Chad, the European Union deployed a bridging military force in 2008 in support of the protection of civilians mandate authorized by the Security Council. In January 2009, the Council expanded MINURCAT's mandate to provide for the deployment of a United Nations follow-on force."

Paragraph 48

5. It is important to clarify that the Joint Support and Coordination Mechanism (JSCM) retained its UNAMID mandate outside the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU). The JSCM is part of a hybrid mission reporting to both the United Nations and the AU. The UNOAU reports only to the United Nations, while supporting the AU.

Paragraph 76

6. DPKO/DFS agree that having multiple points of entry for partners in the Departments can be a hindrance to effective cooperation. However, we do not agree that this is due to a lack of "transparency" from the United Nations. By using the phrase "not sufficiently transparent" the report seems to suggest that DPKO and DFS are purposefully withholding information from partners, or are misdirecting them, which is not the case. We thus suggest that the first sentence in paragraph 76 be reworded to read: "Feedback indicated that the Departments' structure for cooperation with regional organizations was not sufficiently clear."

Paragraph 79

7. We suggest that the last sentence in paragraph 79 be reworded to read as follows: "Furthermore, the forums for sustained high-level dialogue, such as the UN-EU Steering Committee and UN-AU Joint Task Force for Peace and Security, were important to sustaining momentum in the partnership."

Recommendations

8. DPKO/DFS agree with the recommendations in the report and are prepared to take appropriate measures to implement them, where possible. However, the two Departments would like to point out that the successful implementation of these recommendations will depend on the willingness and capacity of the regional organizations that are its partners.

Paragraph 88

9. In so far as the AU is concerned, the United Nations strategic approach to peace and security issues with the AU is the subject of twice yearly reviews by the Security Council. The next report on the strategic approach and operational issues is due to be issued in April 2011.

Paragraph 89

10. DPKO is expanding its activities impacting the knowledge and understanding of the structure, procedures and constraints of regional organizations. For instance, with regards to the AU, this is being addressed at two levels. First, through the establishment of the UNOAU, whose mandate covers the need to assist the AU to develop its capacity in the area of peace and security, including advice on United Nations best practices; second, through ongoing initiatives at the Headquarters level to enhance information exchange and knowledge sharing as recommended in the report of the Secretary-General of 18 September 2009. In the field, UNOAU already serves as the interface for exchange of information and knowledge sharing on United Nations best practices for the AU Commission and the Regional economic communities/Regional mechanisms. Furthermore, since OIOS conducted its evaluation, DPKO enhanced its interaction with the EU and the NATO by introducing monthly meetings with the liaison officers to discuss policy issues, operational planning, as well as practical initiatives for mutual support.

Paragraph 93

11. DPKO/DFS have fully supported the establishment of the UNOAU and its integrated nature. Nevertheless, all the existing mandates and tasks that have been requested from the Secretariat by the Security Council and the General Assembly have remained unchanged. UNOAU, therefore, requires the same level of support from the respective components of the three Departments (DPA, DPKO and DFS) in line with their respective mandates of the former entities that have been brought together under the UNOAU. The specific nature of the mandates and diversity of the tasks necessitates the engagement of a number of offices to support the UNOAU. It is also the main reason why the UNOAU is required to report separately to relevant Departments on matters related to their respective mandates. In addition, it is important to note that the Somalia Coordination and Planning Team (SCPT) in the Africa Division II of DPKO was created to backstop not only the UNOAU functions related to AMISOM, but also to implement other mandates, including support to UNPOS on the Somali security institutions, contingency planning for the eventual deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation at the right time, and the focal point on naval counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia. With regard to DFS support to the UNOAU, it has been provided through existing resources within various divisions in the Department.

12. DPKO/DFS will continue to review their structures at Headquarters in order to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources. As indicated in paragraph 48 of the report, "it is too early to assess the effect of the UNOAU", and therefore, it is premature to define the most appropriate support structures to the UNOAU. At this stage, an interdepartmental working group led by DPKO (with DPA and DFS participation) continues to coordinate support to UNOAU on all capacity-building support to the AU with respect to peacekeeping related matters. A support working group led by DFS (with DPA and DPKO participation) was also established to coordinate all support matters to UNOAU.

13. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft report. We stand ready to provide any further information that may be required.